

March 21, 1996

SECY 96-061

For: The Commissioners

From: James L. Blaha, Assistant for Operations, Office of the EDO

Subject: WEEKLY INFORMATION REPORT - WEEK ENDING MARCH 15, 1996

Contents

Enclosure

Nuclear Reactor Regulation	A
Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards	B
Nuclear Regulatory Research	C*
Analysis and Evaluation of Operational Data	D
General Counsel	E*
Administration	F
Information Resources Management	G*
Controller	H*
Personnel	I
Small Business & Civil Rights	J*
Enforcement	K*
State Programs	L*
Public Affairs	M
International Programs	N*
Congressional Affairs	O
Regional Offices	P
Executive Director for Operations	Q*
Office of the Secretary	R*

*No input this week.

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Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation
Items of Interest
Week Ending March 15, 1996

Braidwood Unit 1

The licensee (ComEd) shut down Braidwood Unit 1 on March 8, 1996, due to AT&T round cell battery problems. Through individual cell testing of two cells, the licensee determined that the battery capacity was significantly lower than expected. The two cells tested at 62 and 63 percent of rated capacity.

The results of recent tests at Braidwood have indicated that some unexpected loss in available battery capacity is occurring and may be generic. The staff is concerned that the AT&T round cell batteries which are used by a few other utilities may have the same problem. If sufficient excess capacity does not exist, there may be time periods when the batteries may not be capable of meeting their design basis requirement.

The staff is following the licensee's root cause evaluation and is evaluating the generic implications at this time.

Commonwealth Edison Company

On March 14, 1996, ComEd announced that Mike Wallace has asked Harry Keiser to be the Chief Nuclear Operating Officer (CNOO). In this capacity, he will assume responsibility for all six nuclear sites, with the three PWRs reporting to him directly and the three BWR sites reporting to him through Steve Perry (Vice President for BWR Operations).

John Hosmer, Vice President for Engineering will now report directly to Harry Keiser. ComEd also stated that additional review is being conducted of all other support groups to determine which are most appropriately aligned directly under Harry Keiser and which should report to Mike Wallace as Chief Nuclear Officer (CNO). That review will be completed by 04/05/96.

Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards
Items of Interest
Week Ending March 15, 1996

Highly Enriched Uranium Vulnerability Assessment by the Department of Energy

On March 12, 1996, a representative from the Nuclear Regulatory Commission attended the initial meeting of the Department of Energy working group to commence the High Enriched Uranium Environmental, Safety, and Health Vulnerability Assessment Project. This working group will conduct an assessment and issue a report by August 30, 1996, on highly enriched uranium vulnerabilities at all weapons sites. The assessment will focus on safety.

Nuclear Fuel Services, Inc.

On March 8, 1996, representatives from Nuclear Fuel Services (NFS) met with Division of Fuel Cycle Safety and Safeguards staff to present information concerning NFS' new business initiatives and to describe their anticipated interactions with the Nuclear Regulatory Commission for the foreseeable future. Among the initiatives discussed was the work planned to start this spring on material from the Department of Energy's Rocky Flats plant.

Acquisition of Rock Sample from Potential Repository at Yucca Mountain, Nevada

The Division of Waste Management staff has obtained a large rock sample from the repository horizon in the Exploratory Studies Facility (ESF) at the candidate, high-level radioactive waste repository site at Yucca Mountain, Nevada. The rock sample, which is about a cubic foot and weighs about 100 pounds, will be sent to the Center for Nuclear Waste Regulatory Analyses, the contractor supporting the staff's high-level waste program. The sample will be used primarily to investigate the survival of microorganisms in the rock at different temperatures and the effect of these natural organisms on the corrosion of emplaced waste package materials. Recent literature surveys indicate the potential for microbiologically influenced corrosion to most of the candidate waste package materials (e.g., stainless steels, nickel alloys) with the exception of titanium and its alloys.

Briefing of Newburgh Heights, Ohio

On February 28, 1996, Division of Waste Management and Region III staff participated in a site tour and briefing for the Mayor of Newburgh Heights, Ohio, and the Village Council on the status of Chemetron decommissioning activities. Representatives from Chemetron, the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (OEPA), and the Ohio Department of Health also participated in the briefing. Representatives from Senator Glenn's office, Congressman Hoke's office, and the Cuyahoga County Board of Health, and local residents were also present for the briefing. The primary issue resulting from the briefing was how soon the Nuclear Regulatory Commission and OEPA could complete their reviews and approve the proposed remediation plans. NRC staff indicated that it appeared reasonable that a determination on the Bert Avenue site could be made in the May-June timeframe. OEPA staff thought that a determination could be made in the June timeframe if recent Chemetron responses to OEPA comments are acceptable and no new issues emerge.

Massachusetts May Suspend Search for a Low-Level Waste Site

An Associated Press article in the March 8, 1996, issue of the Boston Globe reported the Massachusetts Low-Level Radioactive Waste Management Board may suspend its two-year search for a low-level waste site. Members of the Board are expected to vote on the future of

the search at a meeting on March 27, 1996. The article reports that Governor Weld wants to eliminate the Board in his plan for reorganizing State Government and his budget provides no money for it. Leo Roy, State Undersecretary of Environmental Affairs and member of the Board, reportedly told the Globe, "Given changes in the national waste management scene...there is no need" for a radioactive waste site in Massachusetts. Continuing, "Governor Weld does not want to put our citizens through a needless siting trauma." According to the article, 69 of the State's 361 cities and towns have passed resolutions opposing the search for a radioactive waste site in Massachusetts.

Association of Metropolitan Sewerage Agencies Briefs the Environmental Protection Agency

On March 6, 1996, staff of the Division of Waste Management and Office of Research attended a briefing for Ramona Trovato, Director of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Office of Radiation and Indoor Air, provided by the Association of Metropolitan Sewerage Agencies (AMSA). Representatives of the Water Environment Federation and several publicly owned treatment works (POTWs) also participated in the briefing. AMSA reported on preliminary results of a voluntary survey of radionuclide concentrations in sludge and ash at POTWs. The survey was performed because of AMSA concerns related to the potential application of EPA's site clean-up rule. To date, sludge and ash samples from at least 50 waste water plants in at least 18 states have been analyzed. The preliminary results suggest that at least two radionuclides are present in many cases in significant quantities -- the naturally-occurring radionuclides potassium and radium. Due to limitations in the AMSA survey, the participants discussed the possibility of a more extensive Nuclear Regulatory Commission/EPA jointly funded survey of sludge and ash to assess the need for NRC rulemaking. The industry representatives stated their continued interest in a joint guidance document addressing reconcentration of radioactive material at waste water treatment facilities. The POTWs are also seeking the authority to review the NRC/Agreement State licensees' discharges. Further meetings are planned to discuss the NRC/EPA survey and the contents of the joint guidance.

Office for Analysis and Evaluation of Operational Data
Items of Interest
Week Ending March 15, 1996

Safety Programs Division (SPD)

Reactor Analysis Branch (RAB)

NUREG/CR-6442 – "Evidence of Aging Effects on Certain Safety-Related Components"

NUREG/CR-6442, "Evidence of Aging Effects on Certain Safety-Related Components," has been completed and distributed. The report documents a study conducted with the Nuclear Energy Agency (NEA) which summarizes the effects of aging of certain active components in commercial nuclear power plants in France, Sweden, Finland, Japan, the United Kingdom, and the United States. The study indicates that, with some exceptions, active components do not present a significant aging problem in commercial nuclear power plants, but that aging studies are important in identifying and solving potential aging problems.

Reliability and Risk Assessment Branch (RRAB)

Consolidation of Event Related Databases

An AEOD memorandum to the EDO dated 3/7/96, forwarded the recommendations for consolidating event related databases based on the report of the event review group. Representatives from AEOD, NRR, NMSS, OSP RES, IRM, OE and the regions gathered and analyzed information from the agency systems to consolidate event related databases in order to streamline information gathering, storage, dissemination, retrieval, and analysis. The report identified 37 databases and described activities to modify many of these systems. Questions related to this report can be directed to Dale Yeilding (415-6355) who coordinated this activity for AEOD.

Incident Response Division (IRD)

Emergency Response Branch (ERB)

Meeting of Emergency Support Function Leaders Group

Members of AEOD staff participated in the meeting of the Emergency Support Function Leaders Group (ESFLG) on Wednesday, March 13, 1996. The agenda for this meeting was dedicated to the report of the Catastrophic Disaster Response Group (CDRG) Core Group on the review of Federal capabilities in managing consequences of Nuclear, Biological, and Chemical (NBC) terrorist events. The Core Group comprises representatives from FEMA, EPA, DOE, DOD, GSA, DHHS, DOS, DVA, NCS, FCS, and the NRC. This activity responds to the Presidential Decision Directive directing Federal agencies to assess the adequacy of the Federal capabilities to effectively respond to NBC terrorist events. The final report will go to the President on July 1, 1996.

Catawba Exercise

On March 12, 1996, members of AEOD participated in a limited exercise with Catawba, Region II and the States of North and South Carolina. The limited exercises are part of the AEOD State Outreach program designed to participate more frequently in exercises with States. All objectives were satisfactorily met. A member of AEOD and Region II participated in a Tabletop ingestion phase exercise associated with the Catawba exercise on March 14 with the State of North Carolina. This participation is also part of the State Outreach effort.

Preliminary Notifications

- a. PNO-I-96-916, Lane Construction Co., STOLEN TROXLER MOISTURE DENSITY GAUGE
- b. PNO-II-96-014, Florida Dept. of Transportation, PORTABLE GAUGE STOLEN
- c. PNO-II-96-015, Stottler Starmer & Assoc., Inc., FOUR STOLEN PORTABLE GAUGES
- d. PNO-II-96-016, Georgia Power Co. (Hatch 2), SHUTDOWN EXCEEDING 72-HOURS TO REPLACE SAFETY RELIEF VALVE
- e. PNO-II-96-017, Tennessee Valley Authority (Watts Bar 1), UNPLANNED SHUTDOWN TO INVESTIGATE REDUCED CONDENSER VACUUM
- f. PNO-III-96-011, Ohio State University, POSSIBLE EXTREMITY OVEREXPOSURE
- g. PNO-III-96-012, Commonwealth Edison Co. (Braidwood 1), SHUTDOWN TO REPAIR OR REPLACE INOPERABLE 125 VOLT (DC) BATTERY
- h. PNO-III-96-013, Commonwealth Edison Co. (Zion 1), FROZEN LINE IN SAFETY INJECTION SYSTEM WHILE UNIT SHUT DOWN
- i. PNO-III-96-014, Detroit-Macomb Hospital Corp., THERAPEUTIC MEDICAL MISADMINISTRATION
- j. PNO-IV-96-012C, Agreement State Licensee, RADIOGRAPHY SOURCE FOUND OUTSIDE EXPOSURE DEVICE
- k. PNO-IV-96-014, Innovative Weaponry, Inc., THEFT OF LICENSED MATERIAL

Office of Administration
Items of Interest
Week Ending March 15, 1996

Contract Award

Contract NRC-17-96-001 was awarded to History Associates, Inc., on March 1, 1996, for "U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission History, Vol. III." The period of performance is two years. The total estimated cost plus fixed fee price is \$62,040.

Contract NRC-10-96-143 was awarded to McCormack Levitis Chartered on March 14, 1996, for "Medical Review Officer (MRO) Services." The period of performance is two years with 3 one-year option periods. The firm fixed price is \$33,178.

NOTE: Procurement streamlining methods were used in both of the above contract awards.

Security Policy Forum Committees

Lynn Silvious, Chief, Information Security Branch, attended a Classification Management Committee meeting on March 13, 1996. The main topic of discussion was the implementation of Executive Order 12958, "Classified National Security information." The composition of the Information Security Classification Appeals Panel has been determined, as well as the by-laws for the group. These are to be published in the Federal Register on Friday, March 15, 1996. Representatives from the Intelligence Community outlined their plan to scan, in conjunction with the National Archives, all classified records at the Presidential Libraries, and then provide the documents in electronic format to agencies.

On March 14, 1996, Raymond Brady, Director of Security, attended a Policy Integration Committee (PIC) meeting. The agenda included reports from other Forum committees, and a report on the progress thus far on the development of a "community" photo-identification badge for use by more than one agency. The Committee also reviewed the U.S. security policy on risk management for the protection of classified information, and focused on the need for systematic risk analysis with options which fit the local threat and a general standard.

Significant FOIA Requests Received During Period of March 8 - 14, 1996:

Request for copies of licenses of medical facilities and industrial radiographers, by region, that use Cobalt-60 teletherapy. (Mark Loeser; Radiation Therapy Services Inc.; FOIA-96-114)

Request for a copy of the file related to Investigation Case No. 4-95-005 involving Entergy Operations Inc. (W. Mannear of Poynter, Mannear and Colomb; FOIA-96-115)

Request for correspondence between NRC and Senator Tom Harkin for the past twelve years. (C. St. John; The Strategy Group; FOIA-96-116)

Request for a list of those organizations licensed under the provisions of 10 CFR Part 71 which assess annual fees based on approval of a quality assurance program and qualify as a small entity as provided in 10 CFR Part 171. (V. Borland; FOIA-96-117)

Request for a listing of NRC's I.M.P.A.C.T. card holders with addresses. (Jack Adgate; Andrews Office Products; FOIA-96-118)

Request for records related to the State of Washington's radioactive materials regulatory program under 10 CFR Parts 40 and 30. (Shannon D. Work of Givens, Funke & Work; FOIA-96-119)

Request for records related to Contract Number NRC-39-88211. (Jerry Allen; Gunnison Associates, Inc.; FOIA-96-120)

Request for records related to NRC's response to OMB Circular A-11, Part 43 and IRM long-range planning. (James Kerrigan; Colmar; FOIA-96-121)

Request for access to the locations of nuclear power plants in the San Francisco Bay area. (Bonny Garcia-Moria; FOIA-96-122)

Office of Personnel
Items of Interest
Week Ending March 15, 1996

Quality Customer Service Course Held for the Office of the Controller

On March 14, 1996, the Organizational Development and Training staff presented a Quality Customer Service course to the Office of the Controller. Fifteen employees and managers participated in the course, which was designed specifically for the Controller's office. Coordinated by August Spector, additional sessions of this program will be offered on March 28, 1996, as part of an organizational development program to improve service to internal NRC customers of the Office of the Controller.

Organizational Development and Training Staff Speaks at General Services Administration (GSA) Child Care Fundraising Seminar

The General Services Administration's Office of Child Care, National Capital Region, invited the NRC to speak at its Child Care Fundraising Seminar on March 12, 1996. The focus of the seminar was to hear presentations by representatives from agencies successful in raising funds to support their Child Development Centers' Tuition Assistance Programs. Two agencies were invited to participate: The NRC and the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC). Mary Louise Roe, ODT/OP, presented NRC fundraising strategies including the agency's emphasis on the Combined Federal Campaign, the GSA Recycling Program, and corporate sponsorship. Elizabeth Zerby, Chairman of the Board of Directors for the FERC Child Development Center, discussed FERC's strategies to raise scholarship funds including corporate sponsorship. Approximately 60 representatives from the Federal child care community attended including Center Directors, Agency Representatives, and Board Members.

Arrivals

ECKFELD, Edward	MC&A PHYSICAL SCIENTIST (PFT)	NMSS
PIETRAS, Claudia	INVESTIGATOR (PFT)	OI
WEST, William	RADIATION SPECIALIST (PFT)	RIII

Departures

NONE

Office of Public Affairs
Items of Interest
Week Ending March 15, 1996

Media Interest

Three newspaper reporters attended Hub Miller's news briefing at the Perry plant. Issues covered include the Time magazine article, a leaking fuel rod at Perry, economic deregulation and the Perry plant performance.

School Volunteers Program

The science fair at Mt. Rainier E.S. was judged by Ron Hernan, Kris Parczewski, and George Hubbard, all of NRR, and Christina Lui, RES, and Kien Chang, NMSS.

Mindy Landau, OPA, participated in the science fair at Beverly Farms E.S.

Press Releases

Headquarters:

96-51 NRC to Hold Workshop in Rockville, Maryland on Spent Fuel Storage and Transportation

Regions:

III-96-10 NRC Chairman to Hold News Briefing March 21 Following Visits to Wisconsin Nuclear Power Stations

II-96-33 Vogtle Plant Rated Superior in Three Areas, Good in Fourth Area of Assessment Report

III-96-10A NRC Chairman's Visit to Wisconsin Plants Postponed

IV-96-17 Ft. Calhoun Plant Rated "Superior" in Two Areas, "Good" in Two Others in Assessment Report

MARCH 15, 1996

ENCLOSURE M

Office of Congressional Affairs
 Items of Interest
 Week Ending March 15, 1996

CONGRESSIONAL HEARING SCHEDULE

No. 55

OCA ASSIGN- MENT	DATE & PLACE	TIME	WITNESS	SUBJECT	COMMITTEE
Combs	03/19/96 406 DSOB	2:30	TBA	Comparative Risk Assessment	Senators Chafee/Baucus Environment & Public Works
Madden	03/26/96 2362B RHOB	2:00	DOE	Nuclear Waste Issues	Reps. Myers/Bevill Energy and Water Development Appropriations
Madden	03/27/96 2362B RHOB	2:00	Commission*	FY 97 Appropriations	Reps. Myers/Bevill Energy and Water Development Appropriations
Gerke	03/28/96 325 RSOB	9:30	TBA	Electric Power Industry Competition	Senators Murkowski/Johnston Energy & Natural Resources
Madden	05/02/96 TENTATIVE	TBA	Commission	NRC Oversight	Senators Faircloth/Graham Clean Air, Wetlands, Private Property and Nuclear Safety Environment and Public Works

*A letter of invitation has been received for this hearing.

MARCH 15, 1996

ENCLOSURE O

Region I
Items of Interest
Week Ending March 15, 1996

Nine Mile Point

The contract agreement between Niagara Mohawk Power Corporation (NMPC) and the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers expired on February 29, 1996. The contract was legally extended, in full, until March 9, 1996, while negotiations continued. On March 10, tentative agreement was reached which resulted in another extension while the new contract is being voted on by the union members; voting will be completed by April 4, 1996. The proposed contract is for five years. The major areas of contention center around pay and benefits.

Strike contingency plans are in place and have been reviewed by the NRC Region I staff. NMPC is confident that a strike will not take place; but if one should occur, the current contract agreement is such that a period of 2-3 weeks would be allowed before an actual walk-out by employees would occur.

Meeting with the Department of the Army

A meeting was held in Region I on March 13, 1996 with the Department of the Army to discuss their procedures for release for unrestricted use of military facilities where commodities (such as compasses, watches, calibration sources, gunsights) were used pursuant to NRC licenses. These commodities contain a variety of sealed sources in devices which are authorized for use at Department of Defense installations anywhere in the United States. A representative of Region III participated by telephone because similar licenses are issued to Department of the Army facilities in Illinois. The Army representatives discussed procedures which would define the extent of surveys required prior to release of facilities where these materials were stored. The Army representatives agreed to submit an amendment request which describes the proposed procedures. The same amendment request will be submitted concurrently to Region I and III, which handle all of the commodities licenses. The NRC response to the amendment requests will be coordinated among the two Regions and NMSS.

MARCH 15, 1996

ENCLOSURE

Region III
Items of Interest
Week Ending March 15, 1996

Perry Nuclear Power Plant

Regional Administrator Hubert Miller visited the Perry Nuclear Power Plant on March 12 and 13, 1996. After a tour of the plant and meetings with utility management and NRC staff, he held a news briefing in the Perry Training Center. Three newspapers and one individual from a state agency attended the news briefing.

MARCH 15, 1996

ENCLOSURE P

Region IV
Items of Interest
Week Ending March 15, 1996

Public Meeting with Omaha Public Power District

On Thursday, March 14, 1996, the Regional Administrator and other NRC Regional and Headquarters staff met with the Vice President and other representatives of Omaha Public Power District in a public meeting to discuss NRC's March 4, 1996, letter issuing the Fort Calhoun Station Systematic Assessment of Licensee Performance for the assessment period ending January 27, 1996.

MARCH 15, 1996

ENCLOSURE P